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April 20, 2016

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair
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From: Philip L. Browning
Director

CAREPROVIDER GROUP HOME QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Careprovider Group Home (the Group Home) in July 2015. The Group Home is a Rate Classification Level 12 and has two sites located in the Fifth Supervisorial District which provides services to the County of Los Angeles DCFS placed children. According to the Group Home's Program Statement, its stated purpose is "to provide a safe environment for all children in our care where they can achieve a feeling of self-worth, an appreciation of community, a respect for culture, family and each other."

The QAR looked at the status of the placed children's safety, permanency and well-being during the most recent 30 days and the Group Home's practices and services over the most recent 90 days. The Group Home scored at or above the minimum acceptable score in all 9 focus areas: Safety, Permanency, Placement Stability, Visitation, Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages, Teamwork and Tracking & Adjustment.

A Quality Improvement Plan was not required from the Group Home.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:KR:KDR:rds

Attachments

c: Sachi A. Hamai, Chief Executive Officer
John Naimo, Auditor-Controller
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
Sandra Feldman, Executive Director, Careprovider Group Home
Lajuannah Hills, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division
Lenora Scott, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing Division

CAREPROVIDER GROUP HOME
QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

SCOPE OF REVIEW

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a Quality Assurance Review (QAR) of Careprovider Group Home (the Group Home) in July 2015. The purpose of the QAR is to assess the Group Home's service delivery and to ensure that the Group Home is providing children with quality care and services in a safe environment which includes physical care, social and emotional support, education and workforce readiness, and other services to protect and enhance their growth and development.

The QAR is an in-depth case review and interview process designed to assess how children and their families are benefiting from services received and how well the services are working. The QAR utilizes a six-point rating scale as a *yardstick* for measuring the situation observed in specific focus areas. The QAR assessed the following focus areas:

Status Indicators:

- Safety
- Permanency
- Placement Stability
- Visitation

Practice Indicators:

- Engagement
- Service Needs
- Assessment & Linkages
- Teamwork
- Tracking & Adjustment

For Status Indicators, the QAR focuses on the child's functioning during the most recent 30-day period and for Practice Indicators, the QAR focuses on the Group Home's service delivery during the most recent 90-day period.

For the purpose of this QAR, interviews were conducted with two focus children, one focus non-minor dependent, three Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Children's Social Workers (CSWs) and three Group Home staff members.

At the time of the QAR, the Group Home served 12 DCFS placed children. The focus children's average number of placements was two, their overall average length of placement was six months and their average age was 16. The focus children were randomly selected. One of the focus children was included as part of the sample for the Contract Administration Division's (CAD's) 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review.

QAR SCORING

The Group Home received a score for each focus area based on information gathered from on-site visits, agency file reviews, DCFS court reports and updated case plans, and interviews with the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs and the focus children. The minimum acceptable score is 6 in the area of Safety and 5 in all remaining areas.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Safety - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children are free of abuse, neglect and exploitation by others in his/her placement and other settings.	6	6 - Optimal Safety Status	The focus children have a highly safe living situation with fully reliable and competent caregivers and are protected well at all times. Protective strategies are fully operative and dependable.
Permanency - The degree to which the focus children are living with caregivers, who are likely to remain in this role until the focus children reach adulthood, or the focus children are in the process of returning home or transitioning to a permanent home and the focus children, the Group Home staff, caregivers, DCFS CSWs and if applicable, Department of Probation Officers (DPOs) support the plan.	5	5 - Good Status	The focus children have substantial permanence. The focus children live in a family setting that the focus children, Group Home staff and team members have confidence will endure lifelong.
Placement Stability - The degree to which the Group Home staff ensures that the focus children's daily living, learning and work arrangements are stable and free from risk of disruptions. Known risks are being managed to achieve stability and reduce the probability of future disruptions.	5	5 - Good Stability	The focus children have substantial stability in placement and school settings with only planned changes and no more than one disruption in either setting over the past 30 days.
Visitation - The degree to which the Group Home staff support maintaining important connections with significant family members/Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs) through appropriate visitation and other means.	5	5 - Substantially Acceptable Maintenance of Visitation and Connections	Generally effective family connections are being sought for all significant family members/NREFMs through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies. All appropriate family members/NREFMs have regular visits.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Engagement - The degree to which the Group Home staff working with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs and other team members for the purpose of building a genuine, trusting and collaborative working relationship with the ability to concentrate on the focus children's strengths and needs.	5	5 - Good Engagement Efforts	To a strong degree, a rapport has been developed, such that the Group Home staff, DCFS CSWs, DPOs (if applicable) and the focus children feel heard and respected. Reports indicate that good, consistent efforts are being used.
Service Needs - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children work toward ensuring the focus children's needs are met and identified services are being implemented and supported and are specifically tailored to meet the focus children's unique needs.	5	5 - Good Supports and Services	A good and substantial array of supports and services substantially matches intervention strategies identified in the focus children's case plans. The services are generally helping the focus children make progress toward planned outcomes.
Assessment & Linkages - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs understand the focus children's strengths, needs, preferences and underlying needs and services provided are regularly assessed to ensure progress is being made toward case plan goals.	5	5 - Good Assessment and Understanding	The focus children's functioning and support systems are generally understood. Information necessary to understand the focus children's strengths, needs and preferences is frequently updated.
Teamwork - The degree to which the "right people" for the focus children and their family members/NREFMs, have formed a working team that meets, talks and makes plans together.	5	5 - Good Teamwork	The team contains most of the important supporters and decision-makers in the focus children's lives, including informal supports. The team has formed a good, dependable working system that meets, talks and plans together.

Focus Area	Minimum Acceptable Score	Group Home QAR Score	Group Home QAR Rating
Tracking & Adjustment - The degree to which the Group Home staff involved with the focus children and their family members/NREFMs are carefully tracking the progress that the focus children are making, changing family circumstances, attainment of goals and planned outcomes.	5	5 - Good Tracking and Adjustment Process	Intervention strategies, supports and services being provided to the focus children are generally responsive to changing conditions. Frequent monitoring, tracking and communication of the focus children's status is occurring.

OHCMD conducted the last QAR of the Group Home in September 2014 and noted an opportunity for improvement in the focus areas of Safety, Visitation and Teamwork. In April 2015, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR and to provide the Group Home with technical support to address methods for improvement in these three areas. Based on the information below it appears that the Group Home showed improvement in the areas of Safety, Visitation and Teamwork on their 2015-2016 QAR.

STATUS INDICATORS
(Measured over last 30 days)

Status Indicators	Safety	Permanency	Placement Stability	Visitation
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	4
2015-2016 Scores	6	5	5	5

In the areas of Safety and Visitation, we found that the Group Home had implemented their 2014-2015 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to enhance the quality of care provided to the placed children in its care. The focus children concurred that the Group Home staff makes them feel safe and comfortable in the Group Home. The Group Home child care workers reported that the Group Home provides them with ongoing trainings on following the proper protocols and procedures. For example, a placed child left the Group Home without permission in a vehicle with unknown individuals. The Group Home staff promptly contacted law enforcement and provided them with the make, model and license plate number of a vehicle. DCFS CSWs reported that the Group Home communicates with them quickly and consistently shares information on the focus children with them. The first focus child's family resides out of state. The Group Home makes telephone access available to the focus child so that she can maintain contact with her family and her boyfriend who resides locally. The focus child reported that she is being connected to a mentor.

In the areas of Permanency and Placement Stability, the Group Home continues to provide good quality of services and stability to the focus children. The Group Home continues to assist the focus children in reaching their permanency goals by providing counseling services and family therapy when the permanency goal is family reunification. The Group Home supports the focus children in reaching their permanency goals for Planned Permanent Living Arrangement by preparing them for independence. The focus children have established positive relationships with key adult supporters such as the Group Home staff and Group Home therapist.

PRACTICE INDICATORS
(Measured over last 90 days)

Practice Indicators	Engagement	Service Needs	Assessment & Linkages	Teamwork	Tracking & Adjustment
2014-2015 Scores	5	5	5	4	5
2015-2016 Scores	5	5	5	5	5

In the area of Teamwork, OHCMD found that the Group Home had implemented their 2014-2015 QIP. The Group Home ensures that most of the important supporters in the focus children's lives are involved. The Group Home reports that the teams meet on a quarterly basis. The team includes all parties involved in the focus children's lives so that everyone can hear and share pertinent information. The meeting is a collaborative effort between the focus child, DCFS CSW, therapist, Group Home child care counselors and facility managers and family members.

The focus children reported that their needs were being met by their teams. They reported they are treated as a respected and active participating member of the team.

The DCFS CSWs reported that they are included in discussions and team meetings regarding the well-being of the focus children.

In the areas of Engagement, Service Needs, Assessment & Linkages and Tracking & Adjustment, the Group Home continues to make good efforts to engage the focus children and key people in decisions that are being made on behalf of the focus children. The focus children reported that they have a good connection with the Group Home staff. There continues to be a good array of services being provided to the focus children. Intervention strategies identified in the case plan and Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) match the services that are being provided to the focus children. The Group Home continues to assess the focus children's needs and provides intervention for them to function effectively in daily settings. The Group Home facility managers and the Group Home child care counselors continue to review the focus children's status on a daily basis. The DCFS CSWs reported that the Group Home stays in regular contact with them in regards to the progress and adjustment of the focus children.

NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS AND OVERCOME CURRENT CHALLENGES

In January 2016, OHCMD provided the Group Home with technical support related to the CAD's 2015-2016 Contract Compliance Review findings in the areas of Licensure/Contract Requirement, Facility and Environment and Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery. Technical support was provided on how the Group Home can ensure that Group Home vehicles are always in good repair; Special Incident Reports are properly cross-reported and allowances log documented; common areas are free of hazards; non-perishable food are not kept past their expiration dates and how the Group Home can ensure that the NSPs are comprehensive.

In March 2016, the Quality Assurance Reviewer met with the Group Home to discuss the results of the QAR. The Group Home was not required to provide a QIP.